

Torbay Council Priorities & Resources Review Panel

Briefing Note: Adult Social Care

Background

The Council's Priorities and Resource Panel met on 11 January 2013. A number of questions arose in the course of presentations, from officers of the Care Trust, in regard to Community Alarms and proposed reductions in social care staffing. Additionally Members raised a range of more general questions in regard to the proposed budget for adult social care in 2013/14.

At the time of the meeting the officers present did not have all the information necessary to answer some of the Members questions. Answers to these questions are set out in this briefing note, as is contextual information to provide Members with a fuller picture of the background to the adult social care budget proposals and the work undertaken, on behalf of the Council, by the Trust.

Contextual Information

The Trust co-ordinates the assessment and delivery of a range of social care services to adults across Torbay on behalf of the Council. These services are commissioned to discharge the Council's statutory responsibilities to ensure that people who are in need of social care services receive an assessment of their care needs and then, where appropriate, such services as are necessary to meet their assessed care needs.

In undertaking an assessment of care needs Trust staff apply eligibility criteria which are set nationally and known as 'Fair Access to Care Services' criteria (usually referred to as FACS). The eligibility criteria, which are designed to identify risks which threaten a person's ability to manage in the community, are set out under four bands:

- Critical
- Substantial
- Moderate
- Low

It has previously been agreed, between the Trust and the Council, that in Torbay services funded through the Council would only be provided to meet needs which are assessed as being 'Critical' or 'Substantial'. Nationally 67% of Local Authorities have adopted this position, and 2% of Authorities meet only those needs assessed as being 'Critical'.

A key factor in the demand for adult social care services is that the population is both rising and becoming proportionately older. This is important because the rise in the population means that there are more people needing care services at the same time the increasing age of the population means that the needs people have are becoming more severe and more complex. These two factors are resulting in sustained upward pressure in demand for the adult social care services funded through the Council. These pressures arise from:

- Demographic growth and the increasing proportion of older people in the population.
- People with significant care needs moving into Torbay (this is known as 'Ordinary Residence').
- Transition of people from services for children into adults services.
- Cost pressures for providers (an example of this is the current review of care homes fees).

Specific Issues Raised by Members

1. Adult Social Care Staffing (£645,000 reduction):

Question:

Please provide:

- *A breakdown of how this figure will be achieved.*
- *What changes will be made to achieve this saving?*

Response:

The figure of £645,000 is the aggregate total for the three cost improvement work streams illustrated in the table below:

Project	Description/Summary	Projected Saving
Social Care Workforce	To review current business processes, staff allocations per team, job roles and skills mix to ensure that the necessary level of staff time is made available in the most efficient way. Seven posts (equating to £260,000) are currently vacant and will held pending the outcome of this review.	£387,000
Reduction in management costs	The Zone Team structure will be revised to match the geographic boundaries established for primary care in Torbay by the new Clinical Commissioning Group. This will enable the Trust to reduce zone structures from 4 to 2. These management posts are only part funded from social care funding allocations so only a proportion of the benefits will accrue to the adult social care budgets.	£70,000
Reduction in back office costs	Proposals to deliver a recurrent reduction in the back office costs associated with the delivery of adult social care functions are being developed. These are being subjected to careful evaluation to ensure that these necessary savings can be made whilst minimising the impact on the planning, delivery and monitoring of adult social care services.	£188,000
		£645,000

2. Adult Social Care – Overall saving £2.16 million:

Question:

Against the projected overspend within 2012/13, how confident is the Director of Adult Social Services that these savings can be delivered?

Response:

The Trust is confident that the savings set out the Trust's Cost Improvement Plans are deliverable. However there are a number of risks to the Council and the Trust in delivery of the commissioning agreement set out in the Annual Strategic Agreement for 2013/14, these include:

- **Ordinary residence:** Movement of ordinary residence can create in year pressures and this will be monitored closely through social care programme board.

- **Risk of capacity to deliver changes:** The requirements of this commissioning agreement are the further changes and savings to back office and assessment processes. Capacity in zone teams may impact on the pace of delivery. This is mitigated through assurance from the Trust that operational services at the front end can be delivered in a different way.
- **Care home fees:** Council is setting (as a separate decision) a 2 year set of fees within a new banding structure for residential care which may be open to challenge. This is mitigated through a consultation process with providers throughout 2012/ 13.
- **Community concern:** Concern may be raised in response to implementation of the programmes of work outlined in the Annual Strategic Agreement which may affect the pace of delivery. This is mitigated through the close involvement of, and engagement with, individuals and communities.
- **Acquisition process:** The Trust may be acquired by another NHS Foundation Trust and this could result in distraction from delivery of this agreement. This is mitigated through close working between senior officers and the NHS; the Mayor and Councillors; NHS chairs and board members.

3. Adult Social Care – Domiciliary Care:

Question:

“How do you propose to achieve closer working with the voluntary/third sector”

Response:

The cost of domiciliary care has been reduced through the introduction of revised contractual arrangements and unified costing structure. However a review of the current contracts with providers indicates that to keep people safe the Trust is still having to arrange for the provision of a significant level of shopping and house work type services. Whilst it seems that the majority of these services are necessary to promote independence the Trust believes that safe and effective shopping and housework type services could be delivered more cost effectively through other means.

The Trust is in the process of developing proposals to take this work forward. As part of this a pilot project is being developed in the Paignton and Brixham areas; Brixham Does Care and Age UK are both involved in these discussions. Whilst the final outcome is not yet clear it is likely to include working with the voluntary sector to see if voluntary organisations could develop services, particularly around shopping, which would tie into supermarket home delivery services and, at the same time, reduce social isolation.

4. Community Alarms

Question:

“What would be the criteria for someone to receive a community alarm?”

Response:

The proposal is that an individual would normally only be eligible for a community alarm where their need for an alarm is assessed as critical or substantial (under FACS eligibility criteria) and they are unable to arrange or provide an alarm themselves and there is no one else willing and able to assist them. Circumstances in which this might apply would include:

- Providing a community alarm for up to three months while someone is undergoing a period of assessment or rehabilitation to determine their long term care needs.

- Providing a community alarm for an interim period while someone is subject to a safeguarding investigation.
- Providing a community alarm while someone is awaiting the appointment of an attorney to act on their behalf under the Office of the Public Guardian (previously known as the Court of Protection).
- When a community alarm is required as part of a of a telecare package, because an additional device (such as a smoke, falls or carbon monoxide detector) needs to be connected to the alarm, the alarm will be provided for as long as the telecare package is necessary to meet a 'critical' or 'substantial' need.

Additionally if it was agreed that an individual has exceptional circumstances which require the provision of a community alarm for longer than 3 months, then the cost of the alarm would become part of the individual's personal budget as identified by the resource allocation system. This would be subject to regular review of need.

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